

REMARKS

The Office Action of September 28, 1998, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over the patent to Kobler, et al. in view of the patent to Fantoni, the patent to Johnson, the patent to Tittgemeyer and in view of acknowledged prior art.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references applying to claim 1 and further in view of the patent to Fromson, et al. and the patent to Gerhardt.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over the same references applied to claim 1.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references applied to claim 1, and further in view of the patent to Kuhn, et al. and the patent to Morgan.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references applied to claim 1, and further in view of Kuhn, et al. and Gerhardt.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references applied to claim 1, and further in view of Kuhn, et al., the patent to Lewis and the patent to Berna, et al.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over the same references as claim 1.

Claims 9-11 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of the secondary references applied to claim 8, and further in view of the patent to Dekumbis, et al.

Claims 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of Fantoni, Johnson, Fromson, et al., Gerhardt, Tittgemeyer, and the acknowledged prior art.

Claims 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of Fantoni, Kuhn, et al., Morgan, Johnson, Tittgemeyer, and acknowledged prior art.

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of Johnson, Fantoni, Kuhn, et al., Tittgemeyer, Gerhardt, and acknowledged prior art.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Kobler, et al. in view of Johnson, Fantoni, Fadner, et al., Morgan, Jenkins, Tittgemeyer, and acknowledged prior art.

In view of the Examiner's rejections of the claims applicants have amended claims 1, 8, 12, 14, 16 and 17.

The present invention has the specific objective of improving on sleeve-shaped printing forms as disclosed, for example, by Kobler, et al. so that they can be used for endless printing. The presently claimed invention accomplishes this objective by processing or working at least the crowned region of the weld seam so that a homogeneous, continuous and uniform outer circumferential surface is present on the carrying sleeve to permit continuous printing in spite of the presence of a weld seam.

Kobler, et al., provide absolutely no teaching concerning the outer surface of the sleeve 1. Instead, Kobler, et al. deal with the inner side of the sleeve 1, wherein a weld seam is provided as a guiding element for a groove in the form cylinder. Thus, Kobler, et al. provide absolutely no teaching concerning the outer surface of the sleeve, nor is there any suggestion for processing the outer surface of the weld seam, as in the presently claimed invention. Applicants also wish to point out that it is not possible to undertake continuous printing with the printing form

of Kobler, et al. There is nothing in the teachings of Kobler, et al. which would suggest the modification of the outer surface of the weld seam as recited in the presently claimed invention.

The patent to Fantoni, et al. does not teach a printing sleeve wherein only the facing edges of the sleeve are connected by a weld seam, as in the presently claimed invention. Fantoni, et al. only discuss an alternative connecting configuration wherein the end regions of the sleeve are folded over one another.

Johnson discloses a cylindrical member having a weld seam on the inner side of the sleeve which acts as a guide element for a groove in the underlying cylinder.

Tittgemeyer, et al. disclose a method and apparatus for printing with a lithographic sleeve. Tittgemeyer, et al. provide absolutely no teaching concerning a weld seam or the processing of the crowned portion of the weld seam to provide a homogeneous, continuous and uniform outer circumferential metal surface so as to permit continuous printing, as in the presently claimed invention.

The Examiner combined these references in determining that claims 1, 3 and 8 would be unpatentable over such a combination. It is respectfully submitted that a combination of these references provides no teaching or suggestion for modifying the sleeve-shaped form of Kobler, et al. to arrive at the presently claimed invention. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 8 under 35 USC 103(a) over a combination of the above-discussed references is overcome and should be withdrawn.

As for the remaining references, they have also been considered. Applicants respectfully submits that none of the remaining references provides any additional teaching which when taken in combination with any or all of the previously discussed references would suggest or

lead those skilled in the art to modify the teachings of Kobler, et al. to arrive at the presently claimed invention.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections of claims 3-7 and 9-17 under 35 USC 103(a) are also overcome and should be withdrawn.

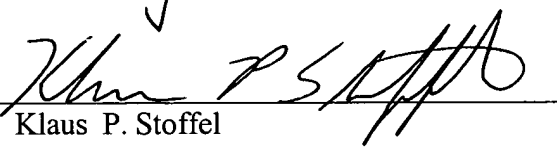
Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

It is believed that no fees or charges are required at this time in connection with the present application ; however, if any fees or charges are required at this time, they may be charged to our Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 03-2412.

Respectfully submitted,

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